EAZEROUNI LAW GROUP, APC 2700 N. Main Street, Ste. 1099 Santa Aus, California 92705	1 2 3 4 5	KAZEROUNI LAW GROUP, A Abbas Kazerounian, Esq. (SBN: 24920 ak@kazlg.com Matthew M. Loker, Esq. (SBN: 279939 ml@kazlg.com 245 Fischer Avenue, Unit D1 Costa Mesa, CA 92626 Telephone: (800) 400-6808 Facsimile: (800) 520-5523	)  I 3 AU  CLERK U CENTR	FILED  G 23 PM 1: 10  S. DISTRICT COUPT AL DIST. OF CALIF					
	7 8 9 10 11	HYDE & SWIGART Joshua B. Swigart, Esq. (SBN: 225557 josh@westcoastlitigation.com 2221 Camino del Rio South, Suite 101 San Diego, CA 92108. Telephone (619) 233-7770 Facsimile: (619) 297-1022							
	12 13 14 15 16	Attorneys for Plaintiff, Julean James  UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA							
	17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28	PORTFOLIO RECOVERY ASSOCIATES, LLC; AND, SESSOMS & ROGERS, P.A.,  Defendants.  /// /// /// /// ///	FOR VIOLATIONS OF AIR DEBT COLLECTIONS OF AIR DEBT COLLECT PRACTICES ACT, 15 1692, ET SEQ.  JURY TRIAL DEMAIN	AMAGES OF THE CTION OU.S.C. §					
		COMPLAINT FOR DAMAGES		PAGE 1 OF 7					

3.

#### Introduction

- The United States Congress has found abundant evidence of the use of abusive, deceptive, and unfair debt collection practices by many debt collectors, and has determined that abusive debt collection practices contribute to the number of personal bankruptcies, to marital instability, to the loss of jobs, and to invasions of individual privacy. Congress wrote the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, 15 U.S.C. § 1692 et seq, to eliminate abusive debt collection practices by debt collectors, to insure that those debt collectors who refrain from using abusive debt collection practices are not competitively disadvantaged, and to promote consistent State action to protect consumers against debt collection abuses.
- The California legislature has determined that the banking and credit system and grantors of credit to consumers are dependent upon the collection of just and owing debts and that unfair or deceptive collection practices undermine the public confidence that is essential to the continued functioning of the banking and credit system and sound extensions of credit to consumers. The Legislature has further determined that there is a need to ensure that debt collectors exercise this responsibility with fairness, honesty, and due regard for the debtor's rights and that debt collectors must be prohibited from engaging in unfair or deceptive acts or practices.<sup>1</sup>
- JULEAN JAMES ("Plaintiff"), by Plaintiff's attorneys, brings this action to challenge the actions of PORTFOLIO RECOVERY ASSOCIATES, LLC (individually as "PORTFOLIO" or collectively as "Defendants"); and, SESSOMS & ROGERS, P.A. (individually as "SESSOMS" or collectively as "Defendants") with regard to attempts by Defendants, debt collectors, to unlawfully and abusively collect a debt allegedly owed by Plaintiff, and this conduct caused Plaintiff damages.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Cal. Civ. Code §§ 1788.1 (a)-(b)

- 4. Plaintiff makes these allegations on information and belief, with the exception of those allegations that pertain to a plaintiff, or to a plaintiff's counsel, which Plaintiff alleges on personal knowledge.
- 5. While specific violations are described below with specificity, this Complaint alleges violations of the statute cited in its entirety.
- 6. Unless otherwise stated, all the conduct engaged in by Defendants took place in North Carolina.
- 7. Any violations by Defendants were knowing, willful, and intentional, and Defendants did not maintain procedures reasonably adapted to avoid any such violation.
- 8. Unless otherwise indicated, the use of Defendants' name in this Complaint includes all agents, employees, officers, members, directors, heirs, successors, assigns, principals, trustees, sureties, subrogees, representatives, and insurers of Defendants' named.

#### JURISDICTION AND VENUE

- 9. Jurisdiction of this Court arises pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1331 and 15 U.S.C. §
- 10. This action arises out of Defendants' violations of the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, 15 U.S.C. §§ 1692-1692(p) ("FDCPA").
- 11. Because Defendants do business within the State of California, and the violation occurred in California personal jurisdiction is established.
- 12. Venue is proper pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391.

#### **PARTIES**

13. Plaintiff is a natural person who resides in the county of San Luis Obispo in the State of California, from whom a debt collector sought to collect a consumer debt which was due and owing or alleged to be due and owing from Plaintiff. In addition, Plaintiff is a "consumer" as that term is defined by 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(3).

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- 14. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and thereon alleges, that Defendant PORTFOLIO is a company incorporated in Norfolk, Virginia and operating from the State of North Carolina.
- 15. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and thereon alleges, that Defendant SESSOMS is a company operating from the City of Durham, State of North Carolina.
- 16. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and thereon alleges, that Defendants, in the ordinary course of business, regularly, on behalf of themselves or others, engage in "debt collection" and are therefore "debt collectors" as the terms are defined by 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(6).
- 17. This case involves money, property or their equivalent, due or owing or alleged to be due or owing from a natural person by reason of a consumer credit transaction. As such, this action arises out of a "debt" as that term is defined by 15 U.S.C. 1692a(5).

#### **FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS**

- 18. At all times relevant, Plaintiff is an individual residing within the State of California.
- 19. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and thereon alleges, that at all times relevant, Defendants conducted business in the State of California.
- 20. Sometime before May 9, 2013, Plaintiff allegedly incurred financial obligations to the original creditor that were money, property, or their equivalent, which is due or owing, or alleged to be due or owing, from a natural person to another person and were therefore "debt(s)" and a "consumer debt" as the terms are defined by 15 U.S.C. § 1692a(6).
- 21. Subsequently, the alleged debt was allegedly assigned, placed, or otherwise transferred, to Defendant PORTFOLIO for collection.

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- 22. Thereafter, but before May 9, 2013, Defendant PORTFOLIO, a debt collector pursuant to the FDCPA, retained Defendant SESSOMS, also a debt collector pursuant to the FDCPA, to proceed with legal action against Plaintiff for the collection of Plaintiff's alleged financial obligations.
- 23. Pursuant to the instructions of Defendant PORTFOLIO, Defendant SESSOMS initiated a lawsuit against Plaintiff entitled PORTFOLIO RECOVERY ASSOCIATES, LLC v. JULEAN JAMES, an individual ("the State Action") on August 31, 2010 in an attempt to collect Plaintiff's alleged debt in the District Court of North Carolina, County of Mecklenburg, court case no.:

  12 CvD 18938.
- 24. Following entry of judgment, Plaintiff retained the Kazerouni Law Group, APC to assist Plaintiff with the judgment.
- 25. In this process, Defendant was informed in writing of the name, law firm, email, telephone number, and address of the attorney retained by Plaintiff to assist with the judgment when Plaintiff's Counsel contacted Defendant's counsel on May 9, 2013 via e-mail.
- 26. Thereafter, Plaintiff's counsel spoke with Defendant's counsel regarding the initial lawsuit on numerous occasions by telephone and e-mail between May 9, 2013 and May 29, 2013.
- 27. Despite this knowledge, Defendant sent directly to Plaintiff via U.S. mail dated June 3, 2013 a written communication attempt. Such contact after the debt collector knows the consumer is represented by an attorney with regard to the alleged debt and had knowledge of Plaintiff's counsel constitutes a violation of 15 U.S.C. § 1692b(6).
- 28. Through this conduct, Defendant also violated 15 U.S.C. § 1692c(2) since Defendant knew that Plaintiff was represented by an attorney with respect to the alleged debt and had knowledge of Plaintiff's counsel's name and address.

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29. Through the conduct discussed above, Defendant took actions against Plaintiff concerning the alleged debt in violation of 15 U.S.C. §§ 1692b(6); and, 1692c(2).

### CAUSES OF ACTION CLAIMED BY PLAINTIFF COUNT I

# VIOLATION OF THE FAIR DEBT COLLECTION PRACTICES ACT 15 U.S.C. §§ 1692-1692(p) (FDCPA)

### [Against All Defendants]

- 30. Plaintiff incorporates by reference all of the above paragraphs of this Complaint as though fully stated herein:
- 31. The foregoing acts and omissions constitute numerous and multiple violations of the FDCPA.
- 32. As a result of each and every violation of the FDCPA, Plaintiff is entitled to any actual damages pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1692k(a)(1); statutory damages for a knowing or willful violation in the amount up to \$1,000.00 pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1692k(a)(2)(A); and reasonable attorney's fees and costs pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1692k(a)(3) from each Defendants individually.

#### PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff prays that judgment be entered against Defendants for:

- an award of actual damages, in an amount to be determined at trial, pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1692k(a)(1), against each named Defendants individually;
- an award of statutory damages of \$1,000.00, pursuant to 15 U.S.C. §
   1692k(a)(2)(A), against each named Defendants individually;
- an award of costs of litigation and reasonable attorney's fees, pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1692k(a)(3), against each named Defendants individually; and,

any and all other relief that this Court deems just and proper. TRIAL BY JURY 33. Pursuant to the seventh amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America, Plaintiff is entitled to, and demands, a trial by jury. Respectfully submitted, Dated: August 20, 2013 KAZEROUNI LAW GROUP, APC 245 FISCHER AVENDE, UNIT DI COSTA MEBA, CA 92626 ATTORNEY FOR PLAINTIFF PAGE 7 OF 7 COMPLAINT FOR DAMAGES

Matthew M. Loker, Esq KAZEROUNI LAW G	ROUP, APC	1 Filed 08/23/13 P	age 8 of 11 Page ID #:22					
245 Fischer Avenue, Un	808 ext. 5							
HH DAN IAMES	UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA							
-JULEAN JAMES,		CASE NUMBER						
	PLAINTIFF(S RY ASSOCIATES, LLC;	CV13-	6216PA (ATHX)					
PORTFOLIO RECOVE AND, SESSOMS & RO		Si	<b>UMMONS</b>					
	DEFENDANT(S	1						
must serve on the plaint  counterclaim cross or motion must be serve 2700 North Main Street	d on the plaintiff's attorney, ; Suite 1000, Santa Ana, CAS I be entered against you for th	complaint \(\sigma\) = 12 of the Federal Rules of Matthew M. Loker, Esq. (2705)	amended complaint of Civil Procedure. The answer , whose address is . If you fail to do so, complaint. You also must file					
Dated:	AUG 2 3 2013	Clerk, U.S. District JULIE PR	Court April 2					
<i>Daws.</i>		Dep	the Court)					
[Use 60 days if the defendan 60 days by Rule 12(a)(3)].	[Use 60 days if the defendant is the United States or a United States agency, or is an officer or employee of the United States. Allowe 60 days by Rule 12(a)(3)].							
CV-01A (10/11	SU	JMMONS						

### Case 2:13-cv-06216-PA-AJW Document 1 Filed 08/23/13 Page 9 of 11 Page ID #:23 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT, CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA CIVIL COVER SHEET

I (a) PLAINTIKES (Check box if you are representing yourself □)				DI	DEPERTMENTS RECOVERY ASSOCIATES, LLC; AND, SESSOMS & ROGERS, P.A.,							
y 1	ourself, provide same.) Matthew M. Loker, Esq. (\$ 245 Fischer Avenue, Unit 1	SBN 27			representing A	tomeys (I	f Known)					
IL BASIS OF JURISDICTION (Place an X in one box only.)  III. CITIZENSHIP OF PRINCIPAL PARTIES - For Diversity Cases Only (Place an X in one box for plaintiff and one for defendant.)									•			
☐ 1 U.S. Government Plaintiff			*** ****				DEF 4					
□2 U.	S. Government Defendant	<b>1</b> 1 4	Diversity (Indicate Citize of Parties in Item III)	enship		Citizen of Another State  2 2 Incorporated and Principal Place 5 0 of Business in Another State				<b>5</b>		
					Citizen or Subject	of a Fore	ign Country [] 3	□3	Foreign Nation		<u> </u>	<u> </u>
_	RIGIN (Place an X in on	e box o			•							
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V. RE	QUESTED IN COMPL	AINT:	JURY DEMAND: 🗗	⁄ස 🏻	No (Check 'Yes'	nly if der	nanded in complai	nt.)				
CLAS	S ACTION under F.R.C	.P. 23:	□Yes tho		□ M	ONEY D	EMANDED IN C	OMPL/	LINT: S			
	AUSE OF ACTION (Cits 5 U.S.C. § 1692, et seq		S. Civil Statute under which Debt Collection Practices	h you	are filing and write	a brief str	atement of cause.	Do not c	ite jurisdictional st	etutes unless div	rersity.)	)
VIL N	IATURE OF SUIT (Plac	e an X	in one box only.)									
STATE OF			ECONDE GRADE		Sugara de La		anorio de la companya		PARGNERS		iore:	
			Insurance		RSONAL INJURY		PERSONAL		<b>建工作的现</b>		bor Str	indards
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	Commerce/ICC	□ 140	Negotiable Instrument		Liability	<b>371</b>	Truth in Lending		Habeas Corpus	Relatio	ons	
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	AFTER COMPLETING THE FRONT SIDE OF FORM CV-71, COMPLETE THE INFORMATION REQUESTED BELOW.											

# Case 2:13-cv-06216-PA-AJW Document 1 Filed 08/23/13 Page 10 of 11 Page ID #:24 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT, CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA CIVIL COVER SHEET

VIII(a). IDENTICAL CASES: Has this action been previously filed in this court and dismissed, remanded or closed? Se No Yes If yes, list case number(s):										
VIII(b). RELATED CASES: If yes, list case number(s):	Have any cases been previ	iously filed in this court that	are related to the present case? SNo Yes							
(Check all boxes that apply)	Civil cases are deemed related if a previously filed case and the present case:  Check all boxes that apply									
IX. VENUE: (When completing the following information, use an additional sheet if necessary.)  (a) List the County in this District; California County outside of this District; State if other than California; or Foreign Country, in which EACH named plaintiff resides.										
(a) List the County in this District; California County outside of this District; State if other than Cainfornia; of Foreign Country, in which EACH named plaintiff testoes.  Check here if the government, its agencies or employees is a named plaintiff. If this box is checked, go to item (b).										
County in this District:* San Luis Obispe County			California County outside of this District; State, if other than California; or Foreign Country							
(b) List the County in this District; California County outside of this District; State if other than California; or Foreign Country, in which EACH named defendant resides.  Check here if the government, its agencies or employees is a named defendant. If this box is checked, go to item (c).										
County in this District:*		:	California County outside of this District; State, if other than California; or Foreign Country Sessoms & Rogers, P.A. resides in the State of North Carolina.							
			Portfolio Recovery Associates, LLC resides in the State of Virginia.							
		tside of this District; State it of the tract of land involv	f other than California; or Foreign Country, in which EACH claim arose.							
County in this District:* San Luis Obispo County			California County outside of this District; State, if other than California; or Foreign Country							
	Λ									
* Los Angeles, Orange, San Be Note: hubani comiennation tas	ernardino, Riverside, Verses, use the location of the	ntura, Santa Barbara, or S nagrof had involved	an Luis Obispa Counties							
X. SIGNATURE OF ATTORN	EY (OR PRO PER)!		Date August 14, 2013							
or other papers as required	by law. This form, approve	ed by the Judicial Conference	mation contained herein neither replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadings e of the United States in September 1974, is required pursuant to Local Rule 3-1 is not filed ing the civil docket sheet. (For more detailed instructions, see separate instructions sheet.)							
Key to Statistical codes relating	to Social Security Cases:									
Nature of Suit C	ode Abbreviation	Substantive Statement of	Cause of Action							
861	ance benefits (Medicare) under Title 18, Part A, of the Social Security Act, as amended, spitals, skilled nursing facilities, etc., for certification as providers of services under the FF(b))									
862	BL	All claims for "Black Lung" benefits under Title 4, Part B, of the Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act of 1969. (30 U.S.C. 923)								
863	DIWC	workers for disability insurance benefits under Title 2 of the Social Security Act, as iled for child's insurance benefits based on disability. (42 U.S.C. 405(g))								
863	All claims filed for widows or widowers insurance benefits based on disability under Title 2 of the Social Security Act, as amended. (42 U.S.C. 405(g))									
864	SSID	All claims for supplements Act, as amended.	al security income payments based upon disability filed under Title 16 of the Social Security .							
. 865	. 865 RSI All claims for retirement (old age) and survivors benefits under Title 2 of the Social Security Act, as amended. (42 . U.S.C. (g))									

### UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

### NOTICE OF ASSIGNMENT TO UNITED STATES JUDGES

	This case has been ass	signed to District Judge	Percy Ander	rson	_ and the assigned
Magist	rate Judge is		<u> </u>		
	The case nu	mber on all documents filed	with the Court shou	ld read as follo	ows:
		2:13CV6216	5 PA AJWx		
Califor		Order 05-07 of the United S dge has been designated to h			District of
	All discovery related	motions should be noticed o	on the calendar of the	: Magistrate Ju	dge.
			Clerk, U. S. D	istrict Court	
	August 23, 2013	- <del></del>	By J.Prado	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	
	Date		Deputy Cl	erk	
		NOTICE TO	COUNSEL	<del> </del>	
	•	served with the summons on		fendants (if a 1	removal action is
filed, a	copy of this notice mu	st be served on all plaintiffs).			
Subsec	quent documents mus	st be filed at the following l	ocation:		
X	Western Division 312 N. Spring Street, G Los Angeles, CA 90012		St., Ste 1053	Eastern Divisi 3470 Twelfth Riverside, CA	Street, Room 134
Failur	e to file at the proper	location will result in your		turned to you	i.